

# WORLD AGRICULTURAL WEATHER HIGHLIGHTS

January 12, 2000

## **1 - UNITED STATES**

In December, the continuation of warm, dry weather across the South further reduced soil moisture, increased irrigation requirements, and stressed dryland crops, including pastures, vegetative winter grains, and cold-season vegetables. Although winter wheat remained dormant farther north, unfavorably dry conditions persisted in the western Corn Belt and on the Plains as far south as western Kansas. In contrast, beneficial precipitation fell across the southeastern Plains and in Texas' northern panhandle. Widespread precipitation also boosted soil moisture from the middle Mississippi and lower Ohio Valleys southward to the central Gulf Coast. Storminess abated after mid-month in the Pacific Northwest. The remainder of the West received little moisture, raising concerns about possibly inadequate spring runoff due to meager snow packs.

## **2 - SOUTH AMERICA**

Despite beneficial early December rainfall, periodic hot, dry weather from mid-December into early January stressed corn and soybeans across extreme southwestern Brazil, southern Paraguay, and east-central Argentina. Below normal rainfall in northern Buenos Aires favored winter wheat maturation and harvesting. Near- to above normal rainfall in the remainder of southern Brazil and western Argentina boosted soil moisture for summer crops and Brazilian coffee.

## **3 - EUROPE**

In December, below normal precipitation in Spain and Portugal slowed winter grain germination and emergence. Above normal precipitation in northwest Europe maintained adequate to excessive soil moisture. In England and eastern France winter grains entered dormancy around mid-month. Above normal temperatures in much of Europe maintained favorable overwintering conditions for dormant and semi-dormant winter grains.

## **4 - NORTHWESTERN AFRICA**

Beneficial moisture occurred throughout the Algerian and Tunisian winter grain areas in December. However, below-normal rainfall in Morocco caused crops to rely on diminishing soil moisture reserves to sustain normal crop development.



USDA/OCE - World Agricultural Outlook Board  
Joint Agricultural Weather Facility

*(More details are available in the Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin.  
Subscription information may be obtained by calling (202) 720-7917.)*

## **5 - FSU-WESTERN**

In December, the combination of unseasonably mild weather and above-normal precipitation improved conditions for winter grains in southern Ukraine and southern Russia and maintained favorable overwintering conditions for crops in northern Russia, Belarus, and the Baltics. Since early January, overwintering conditions remained favorable for winter grains, although crop areas in eastern Ukraine and southern Russia lacked protective snow cover.

## **6 - SOUTH ASIA**

Dry weather aids seasonal fieldwork throughout the region, including late winter wheat and oilseed planting. A mid-January cold snap slows development of winter crops and dry season rice but likely has little, if any, long-term impact on agriculture.

## **7 - EASTERN ASIA**

In early December, winter wheat entered dormancy across the North China Plain, which protected wheat from mid-month cold weather. The cold weather extended to the southern coastal provinces, burning back winter crops and possibly damaging sugarcane. Below normal monthly rainfall reduced moisture supplies for winter rapeseed across the Yangtze Valley.

## **8 - SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Near-normal December rainfall maintained moisture supplies for main-season rice in Java, Indonesia and oil palm in peninsular Malaysia. Unseasonably heavy showers fell across south-central Vietnam and the eastern Philippines, causing flooding and slowing fieldwork. Dry December weather favored rice harvesting in Thailand, while northern Vietnam received above-normal rainfall. Very unseasonably cool weather prevailed across most of Indochina, especially northern Thailand, but no major crop impacts were expected.

## **9 - SOUTH AFRICA**

In mid-December, a shift to a more seasonable weather pattern brought highly-beneficial rain to the corn belt, improving yield prospects and spurring late planting. Beneficial rain also covered coastal sugarcane areas but warm, dry weather continued in Western Cape, raising irrigation requirements in orchards and vineyards.

## **10 - AUSTRALIA**

During December, cool, wet weather caused additional harvest delays in winter crop areas of the east. Quality problems continued in winter grain areas of Queensland and New South Wales but the moisture was beneficial for summer crops. Conditions were mostly favorable for mature winter grains in Western Australia.